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Sent: 8/31/2017 1:53:09 PM
To: Eoc, Epahq [Eoc.Epahq@epa.gov]
Subject: EOC Spot Report, Region 6, Arkema Explosion, Crosby, TX (NRC 1188881)

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EOC Spot Report: Region 6, Arkema Chemical Explosion, Crosby, TX (NRC#1188881)

US Environmental Protection Agency
Report as of 09:40 EDT August 31, 2017

Overview:

At approximately 03:45 EDT on August 31, 2017, two explosions were reported at the Arkema Chemical Facility. According to local responders one of the eight refrigerated trailers on site auto-ignited and is burning. Officials had warned that the plant could explode after its coolant system for the organic peroxide tanks and backup generators failed due to damage from Tropical Storm Harvey. Flooding prevented repairs from being made. Employees evacuated the facility on August 29 and an evacuation order was established for residents within a 1.5 mile-radius of the facility on August 30. As of this morning, no injuries were reported.

Arkema is a Risk Management Plan (RMP) facility. It manufactures liquid organic peroxides and two substances, sulfur dioxide (anhydrous) and 2-methylpropene are present at, or above, the minimum threshold quantity for RMP applicability. There have been no accidental off-site releases of applicable RMP chemicals from the facility in the previous five years.

State, Local and other Federal Agency Actions:

Harris County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management is conducting air monitoring in the area. The Harris County Fire Department is maintaining a 1.5-mile evacuation order around the facility. Poison Control Centers are set up in Texas to help citizens who have health concern questions concerning the Arkema facility or other flood-related health questions.

EPA Actions:

EPA has deployed an On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) to the scene. EPA emergency response personnel in Texas are in direct contact with first responders in Harris County and are providing federal assistance and resources.

On August 30, EPA ASPECT aircraft conducted its initial overflight of the Arkema facility and did not detect any vapors or thermal abnormalities. ASPECT has been deployed again today to provide near real-time information to the OSC. EPA is also sending additional air monitoring personnel and equipment to augment the

current effort of the state and local first responders. Monitoring teams from the Houston area are expected on-scene this morning.

Media Interest: High

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-nation/wp/2017/08/30/texas-town-under-emergency-evacuation-as-flooded-chemical-plant-nears-explosion/?utm_term=.ac2f2ab8e452&wpisrc=al_alert-national&wpmk=1

<http://www.foxnews.com/us/2017/08/31/question-is-when-chemical-plant-outside-houston-could-explode-company-says.html>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/31/us/harvey-houston-texas-flood.html?action=click&pgtype=Homepage&clickSource=story-heading&module=span-abc-region®ion=span-abc-region&WT.nav=span-abc-region>

<https://www.nbcnews.com/storyline/hurricane-harvey/harvey-danger-major-chemical-plant-near-houston-likely-explode-facility-n797581>

HQ EOC will continue to monitor and provide updates as warranted.

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